DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 102 960 IR 001 641

AUTHOR Christine, Emma Ruth
TITLE I. M. P. Independent Miniunit Programs.
PUB DATE 74
NOTE 5p.
JOURNAL CIT Aduiovisual Journal of Arizona; Spring 74

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS American Culture; *American History; Educational Development; Educational Innovation; *Individualized Instruction; Instructional Materials Centers; *Instructional Programs; Learning Laboratories; Librarians; Library Facilities; Library Materials; *Library Role; Media Selection; Program Evaluation; Secondary Education; Team Teaching
IDENTIFIERS IMP; *Independent Miniunit Program

ABSTRACT

To attempt to make learning American history an exciting experience, to sharpen study skills and self-directed learning and to familiarize students with library resources, an experimental sequence of two-week "independent miniunit programs" was established. Eight areas of American life were identified: sports, space and ocean, journalism, photography and films, youth moods, changing lifestyles, United States geography, and music, American style. Materials available on each topic were gathered and learning stations were devised. Working with classroom teachers, students spent one hour at a learning station each day. Progress toward the objectives and student reactions were evaluated. A copy of the evaluation sheet and an outline of the sports miniunit are appended. (SK)

ED102960

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

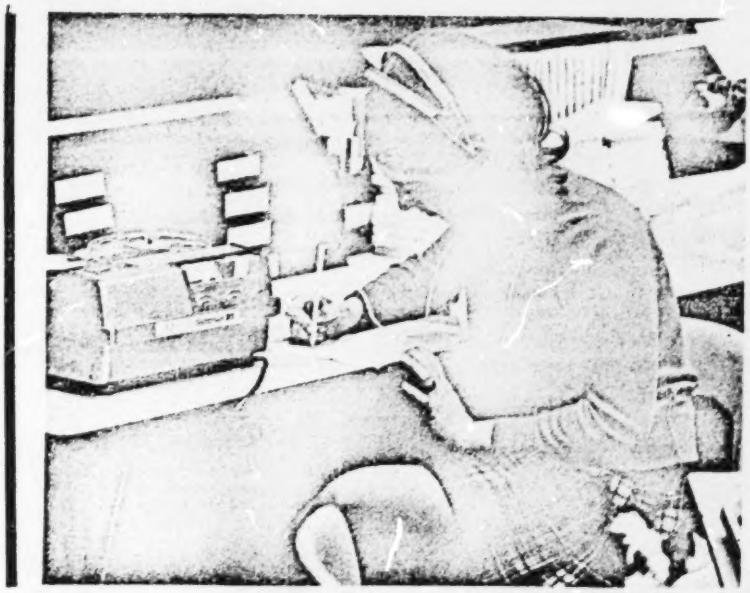
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

I. M. P.

independent miniunit programs

EMMA RUTH CHRISTINE
Resource Teacher
Henry M. Gunn High, Calif.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY AUTHOR



Every year conscientious teachers and librarians strain their collective brains in an effort to "do something different" about teaching required subject matter and library utilization. When teachers and librarians merge their efforts, innovative learning programs occasionally result. Although the still shell-shocked participants in the I.M.P. to be described do not boast that their program was anywhere near perfection, all feel it was worth the mighty effort expended.

What is I.M.P.?

A sincere desire to make learning American history an exciting experience was the prime motive in the establishment of an experimental sequence dubbed "Independent Miniunit Programs" or I.M.P., jointly devised by the library staff and American History teaching team. Equally important objectives were identified as: 1) self-directed student learning governed by student choice of subject concentration, 2) practice in necessary study skills such as note-taking and library source utilization, and 3) familiarization with print and non-print instructional materials and machinery in the library. Reasoning was to use the miniunits in a two-week saturation period at the opening of the fall semester in order to whet the students' learning appetites for American history, as well as to achieve the more formally identified objectives. The library, known as the Resource Center, was especially rich in instructional materials in American history, making this saturation approach possible.

In the initial planning stages, eight areas of American life of particular interest to students were identified: sports (The complete Sports I.M.P will be found at the conclusion of this article), space and ocean, journalism, photography and films, youth moods, changing life styles, United States geography, and music, American style. The library staff gathered all the materials available on the topics, and the teaching team worked its way through, selecting rejecting, and formulating particular objectives and learning activities for each miniunit. All staff agreed it was imperative to have some tangible product at the end of each miniunit; therefore, activities such as preparing note cards, short papers, or outlines to be used as data bases in the discussion seminars were devised.

The library staff then assembled the necessary machinery to accommodate the software programs selected and set up the learning stations in varous parts of the Resource Center. Two conference rooms with twenty-four individual carrels, as well as a listening center laboratory of twenty-four wet carrels and another listening-viewing room seating twelve students, were devoted exclusively to the miniunits. Parts of thee separate study centers also contained elements of the programs. Regular library staff in the main Resource Center numbered two, with a library clerk on duty in each of the three study centers.

The planning, gathering, selection, and unit writing tasks were done in the summer, while the actual typing and production of the finished miniunits was done just before school opened in the fall in order to include new materials acquired especially for such use.

The crucial task of recruiting parent volunteers to act as assistants in the program was also done in the summer. After being briefed on the plan by the Resource Teacher, the P.T.A. Library Commitee chairman signed up some dozen mothers to

IR 001 641

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

work with students in the Resource Center. When the I.M.P was underway, these volunteers showed students how to work machines, answered questions, helped find materials, settled arguments, and in general acted as additional library assistants.

Classroom Procedure

Although each teacher and class functioned independently and in individual fashion, the same general procedure was followed by all. The first day saw each teacher introducing himself and the course. The second day each teacher introduced the miniunit concept, the options that were available to students, and then took the class to the Resource Center for an extensive tour. This included familiarization with the facility's physical arrangement, divided card catalog system, Readers' Guide, reference section, and so forth. Then the actual miniunits were viewed and a brief introduction to the contents and equipment necessary to work through each learning station was given. The students were instructed to choose and complete two miniunits, each of which had six sections. If they desired, and if time allowed, students were encouraged to do a third, or at least parts of a third, miniunit.

By the third day, then the program was operational and continued for two weeks, or a total of five class meetings, 90 minutes in length, every other day. These five meetings included all reading and listening for which short papers and-or notecards were required and also a 45-minute discussion of each of the eight miniunits. As one of the deeply involved teachers put it, "This proved a bit of a strain on the teachers!"

Evaluative Procedures

Three types of participants were contacted to gather information and reaction to the I.M.P. when they concluded — library staff, teaching team members, and students who engaged in the programs.

Library Staff. — "The miniunits helped me become familiar with the books and equipment **in a hurry**" perhaps summed up the feelings of the librarians and parent volunteers! Librarians were lavish in their praise of the volunteers, noting in particular their enthusiasm and rapport with students. On the whole, librarians felt that the students rather enjoyed the new approach and that there was a minimum of noise and unwillingness to work in the initial stages. As the second week wore on, however, a minority of students who apparently had little interest in class anyway did not come in to work until absolutely necessary in order to finish the assignments and accordingly, were difficult to supervise. Consequently, comments from students to the library staff ranged from the expected "I learned a lot about the library" to the equally expected "I didn't learn a thing!"

Physical rather than personal problems were more in evidence in library staff comments, such as bulbs burning out at inauspicious times, not enough cassette players to go around, causing machinery to be shifted from carrel to carrel, not enough electrical outlets to have **everything** connected at one time, and similar crises.

There was also an expressed feeling by library staff members that some of the teachers did not get as thoroughly involved with either the units or the students as had been hoped and expected, since the purpose of the I.M.P had not been solely that of library materials utilization, but a joint endeavor of library and classroom.

Teaching Team. — Teacher reaction varied in detail but agreed on the general value of the I.M.P as an innovative approach to subject matter, the success of which depended heavily on the particular class composition and the degree to which students accepted the concept of working on a largely self-directed basis. With seven teachers and 220 students working through the I.M.P., some were encouraged by the attempt while others quietly threw up their hands! One especially competent teacher made the cogent observation that there was difficulty in selling the idea to a significant number of sophomores who seemed incapable of utilizing their own time and who spent the first weeks of the semester establishing new social contacts on class time! This suggests that the miniunits might benefit by being moved from the opening weeks of school to an interim period, perhaps between two major units of study, as an opportunity for students to "free wheel" intellectually.

Student Participants. — In order to formalize feedback from students, an evaluation sheet* was devised by two of the team teachers and, while no exact data interpretation was attempted, completed evaluation sheets were read and digested.

Even a casual perusal of the comments immediately pointed up the strengths and weaknesses of the I.M.P. to be considered next time around.

Shall We Do It Again?

"At this point in time" and "with hindsight," those engaged in the I.M.P recognize the imperfections of the first venture, but are encouraged by discernible patterns of individual progress as well. Perhaps the next I.M.P. will not be as broad in subject scope nor as inclusive of so many students. Certainly the next I.M.P. will have additional components allowing for more flexibility of student choice to counteract the repeated complaint by some high achievers of "too much structure and too little opportunity to find things" for themselves. The next I.M.P. will be necessity feature some rather pedantic, step by step lessons as accommodation for those students who seem to require them. The first I.M.P. had been a mixture of **some** flexibility and **some** structure and had managed to please neither end of the continuium. So, yes, it seems there will be more I.M.P.s.

Individualization of learning, a generally accepted valid goal worthy of achieving, needs a good psychological climate to succeed. There must be interaction between student and teacher, student and materials, and so between student and student. Experience seems to show, too, that a structured, organized program is more successful for more students than the random "go see what you can find out about . . ." approach, although a degree of open-endedness is essential. There must be abundant, diverse learning materials available. The physical environment — chairs, lighting, equipment — needs planning and deliberate arrangement compatible with the requirements of the miniunits' contents. And of course, the more help, the better — aides, parents, and other students!

The crux of all individualization must be a sincere commitment to the

*Copy of this evaluation sheet will be found at the conclusion of this article.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

program by the staff and students engaged in it. Without this commitment, all else will be for naught. How best to gain that commitment will keep us all thinking until next fall!

Independent Miniunit Program
on
SPORTS

Objective:

By an examination of representative materials and information, to gain some understanding of the importance and impact of sports in American life, past and present.

Carrel No. 1

View the 8mm cartridge films, each lasting about 3 1/3 to 4 mins. After viewing all of these, briefly list on an index card qualities exhibited in the films usually admired by Americans (e.g., bodily strength). List any other appeals which seem to be evident to you, either directly or indirectly (e.g., color and excitement).

FILMS:

No. 80 Gymnastics for men
No. 88 Creative swimming
No. 113 Tennis: Backhand
No. 132 The City at Play
No. 146 Surf riders
No. 148 Many Moods of Skiing
No. 167 Baseball: Hitting
No. 170 Baseball: Base running
No. 181 Track: Sprints
No. 183 Track: Long distance races
No. 237 Soccer: Tackling

NOTE: Use films marked "S" in the silver Super 8 projector, all others in the tan standard projector.

Carrel No. 2

Sports provide the basis for many major magazines and large sections of the daily papers. Many samples are gathered here. Select five (5) magazines or papers and read them, noting the type and extent of coverage given to PEOPLE (Sports personalities) and to COMPETITIVE ASPECTS (league standings, etc.). Prepare an index card on each magazine, noting briefly what you discovered about it. Put name of magazine on top line of card.

From sources available to you at home or elsewhere, or from newspapers in the Main R.C., Annex, LA 4 and BH 9-10, look at the sports sections of at least two (2) newspapers. Make an index card for each, identifying the newspaper, and jot down extent of coverage (how

many pages or columns), dominance if any of a particular sport, whether or not there are pictures, and anything else you find noteworthy.

Periodicals

SPORTING NEWS
AUTOWEEK
FLYING
SPORTS ILLUSTRATED
WRESTLING
SKI
SURFER
SKIN DIVER
CAR & DRIVER
CYCLE
GOLF DIGEST
FOOTBALL

Carrel No. 3

For a look at how sports have been treated in the newspapers and magazines of the past, examine the sports sections in the microfilmed periodicals listed here:

FRANK LESLIES' ILLUSTRATED NEWSPAPER (New York, 1858-1860, any issues)
THE NEW YORK TIMES (1925, known as the "golden year of sports", any issues)
TIME (1939, any issues)
LOOK (1943-44-45, any issue)

Briefly note on an index card for later discussion any **differences** or **similarities** with sports articles of today.

Carrel No. 4

Perhaps more than any other reflection of American life, the PEOPLE who are active in sports generate large followings of "fans" young and old. Here are a group of biographies about various people active now (or earlier) in many sports. Look through them all, then select ONE which appeals to you. Read or skim it thoroughly enough to be able to list on an index card for later discussion what **qualities** of the sports figure made him memorable. Was he brave (in what way)? Was he overcoming a handicap (if so, what): What made him excel at what he did? What sport was he associated with? Do you think he could have become famous in another? Be ready to discuss how the qualities of "your" sports figure seem to be uniquely American, or if these qualities are universal.

Biographies:

What's it like out there? (Andretti)
Mr. Cub (Banks)
Off my chest (Brown)
Muhammad Ali, who was once Cassius Clay
Dempsey
King of the Dragsters (Garlits)
I always wanted to be somebody (Gibson)
From ghetto to glory (Gibson)
Goal! My life on ice (Gilbert)
Parnelli (Jones)
Instant replay (Kramer)
Randy Matson story (Matson)
Stan Musial
The Babe Ruth story
The Jim Ryun story
Deep water (Schollander)
Mr. Clutch (West)
Famous American women athletes
Go up for glory (Russell)
Casey: Life and legend of Chas. D. Stengel

Carrel No. 5

With the summer Olympic Games at Munich just concluded, but with the 1976 Winter Games already well advanced in planning, materials have been assembled here in three categories:

1. BOOKS on the history of the Games, specific Games of the past, and about some champions. LOOK AT ALL of them, but pick ONE to examine thoroughly enough to be able to talk about it in a small group. Make an index card with TITLE and

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

AUTHOR of the book, and jot down any pertinent notes for your discussion.

2. CLIPPINGS assembled during the summer **before** the Games were held. Read these and discover how various predictions made this summer came true (if they did). How did the "big winners" in the trials actually come out in the Games?

3. MAGAZINE ARTICLES on various aspects of the Olympic Games. Look at ALL of them, but choose ONE to make an index card on, identifying the magazine and name of article, writing your **reactions** to the content. You will violently **agree** or **disagree** with most of them. Cite specific quotations from the article for discussion.

Books

1960 U.S. Olympic book Tokyo 1964
The greatest challenge
1964 U.S. Olympic book
The Olympic discus
World history of track and field athletics
Great Olympic champions
The heart of a champion
The official encyclopedia of sports
The super athletes

Magazines

Horizon, Autumn 1969 "The most deadly games," pp. 52-53
National Review, August 11, 1970. "The Olympics and modern philosophy," p. 840.
Newsweek, Jan. 11, 1971 "Amateurs on the skids?" pp. 55-56
New Republic, Jan. 29, 1972. "Snow job in Colorado," pp. 15-19
Life, Feb. 18, 1972. "Salute to Sapporo," pp. 32-54
Saturday Review, Mar. 25, 1972. "From Jesse Owens to the summer of '72," pp. 40-44; "It isn't whether you win or lose, but how you stage the Games," pp. 54-57.

(Author's note: This unit was prepared before the tragic events of Munich, and was subsequently expanded and revised to cover the world-shattering happenings there.)

Carrel No. 6

Participation in sports and the popularity of sports with the general public seems to have been ever-present in American history. Read the indicated sections of the books given below for a general overview of the place sports has held in the U.S.A.

At the conclusion of this miniunit, based on your reading of these selections and the preceding materials, do you feel there will be any significant shift in what has traditionally been wide acceptance of the American sports scene? If so, what and for what reasons? Write a short paper (100-150 words) setting forth your reasoning on this question. Support your theme with any notes, quotations, or sources you've met in ths miniunit or elsewhere!

Books

Durant, Pictorial history of American sports from colonial times to the present
Friendlich, Panorama of sports in America

—In the two books above, look at all the pictures and read about any sports in which you are particularly interested.

Krout, Annals of American sport
Read Chap. 1 "Pioneers at play," pp. 9-28.
Chap. 8 "The Coming of the gymnasium," pp. 206-213.
"The growth of team play," p. 259.
Chap. 12 "The great out-of-doors," pp. 297-301.
(plus the history of any sport YOU like)
Tunis, The American way in sport.
Read the Foreword, vii-xii.
Chap. 1 "What is sport?" pp. 1-8
Chap. 5 "Industrialized sport," pp. 49-67.
Chap. 12 "What shall we do about it?" pp. 159-173.

This unit was prepared entirely by the Resource Teacher and served a demonstration unit for the teaching team.

U.S. History miniunit

Name .....Date.....Class.....

Miniunits researched (also include special areas within the Miniunits you considered):

Titles of
Miniunits: 1 .....2.....

Special areas within the units. Briefly describe the areas you selected:

List five different resources that you used. The list may be drawn from both miniunits:

List any equipment that you operated while researching the Miniunits:

Did you use any special resources in the general reference section of the Resource Center such as the Readers' Guide, etc.? If so, what?

What two questions did you develop for your seminar group?

A Miniunit
Question: .....

B Miniunit
Question: .....

Briefly explain what you considered to be the main purpose of the Miniunits:

Do you feel that the Miniunits accomplished this purpose? Explain.

What did you like about the Miunits? Explain.

What did you dislike about the Miunits? Explain.

How would you improve the Miniunits?

OPTIONAL: Write one analytical question for each unit. The question might be one that you would use to do more research in your area.

(Developed by Mrs. Nancy Grippo and Mr. Tom Frankum, Social Studies Department, Henry M. Gunn High School, Palo Alto, Ca.)